

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated February 22, 2005, claims 18, 20, 23, 25, 28, 30 and 31 are amended, and claims 17, 22, 27 and 29 are canceled. Claims 18-21, 23-26, 28 and 30-32 are now active in this application. No new matter has been added.

The indication that claims 19, 24 and 30 are allowable is acknowledged and appreciated.

OBJECTION TO CLAIMS

Claims 21 and 31 are objected under 37 CFR § 1.75(a). In support of this position, the Examiner identifies language in each claim that lacks clear antecedent support. By this response, new claims 21 and 31 are amended as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 30 is amended similarly as in claim 31 as it has the same language that lacks clear antecedent support. In view of these amendments, it is respectfully urged that the objection be withdrawn.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 17, 18, 20-23, 25-29, 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ricard (USPN 6,731,795).

The rejection of claims 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31 and 32 is respectfully traversed.

Claim 18, depending from claim 17, additionally requires an extracting unit to extract an original region included in said image and that the processor determines the edges continuously extending from a first end to a second end of the extracted original region as corresponding to folds in the original image... The Examiner refers to column 9, lines 36-47 as teaching this subject matter. However, the area within the rectangle identified by the user is the area suspected as being crease and which needs to be filled. For this filling operation, the user

identifies corners of the rectangular area to be filed and the filling “operation” uses the plurality of line segments $A_i B_i$ that make up the area identified by the user as being defective. However, it is clear to that there is no disclosure that a processor determines the edges that continuously extend from a first end to a second end of the extracted original region *as corresponding to folds in the original image*. While column 9, lines 36-39 refers to the possibility of devising algorithms for automatically detecting suspect areas for automatically detecting suspect areas in digital images and repairing them, without user intervention, no details are provided as to such algorithms. The fact that the Ricard describes that devising such algorithms may be possible is not a sufficient disclosure that would enable a person of ordinary skill in the art to actually derive such algorithms. Similar argument apply to claims 23 and 28.

Claim 20, depending from claim 17, additionally requires an attribute detecting unit to detect attributes of two regions *separated by one of the edges detected by said edge detecting unit* and for the processor to determine one of the edges as corresponding to a fold in the original image *when said detected attributes of the two regions* are identical to each other... The Examiner refers again to column 9, lines 36-47 are disclosing this subject matter. However, the Examiner’s reference to a suspect area satisfying the criteria that the pixels are all the same relates to whether or not the suspect area is a crease. The area within the area suspected as being a crease would have all the pixels being the same, as asserted by the Examiner. However, what claim 20 is directed to is that an edge is already detected by the edge detecting unit and then the processor determines whether or not this edge is a fold by determining whether regions on opposing sides of the edge (two regions separated by the edge) have attributes that are the same or not. A fold exists when the regions on opposing sides of the edge have attributes that are the

same, but not when the regions on opposing sides of the edge have attributes that are different. Similar argument apply to claims 25 and 32.

Independent claim 21 is more specific with respect to this subject matter by requiring that the background luminance value of a first region of the received image, at a prescribed distance in a first direction from the detected edge, is substantially equal to the background luminance value of a second region of the received image, at the prescribed distance in a second direction, *opposed to the first direction*, from the detected edge. More specifically, a fold exists when the regions, which are at a prescribed distance on opposing sides of the edge, have substantially the same luminance value, but not when these regions have different luminance values. Similar argument apply to claim 26, as well as to claim 32, which uses the phrase "lightness edge".

As Ricard does not disclose or suggest the features recited in claims 18, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31 and 32, their allowance is respectfully solicited.

To expedite prosecution, claims 18, 20, 23, 25 and 28 are amended to be in independent form and claims 17, 22, 27 and 29 are cancelled.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, it is urged that the application, as now amended, overcomes the rejection of record and is in condition for allowance. Entry of the amendment and favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, are respectfully requested. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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